

Just You Wait, Part 4: Joy

Discussion Questions

For the final week of Advent, we take a look at the biblical theme of joy.

1. **If you're able**, watch The Bible Project's video on joy together with your group, and discuss what you learned from it or what stood out to you about it. You can find the link on FBC's website at fbc-everett.org/advent. (No worries if you can't view the video; just skip to the next question).

2. Consider this quote from C. S. Lewis's book, *Surprised by Joy...*

"... an unsatisfied desire which is itself more desirable than any other satisfaction. I call it Joy, which is here a technical term and must be sharply distinguished both from Happiness and from Pleasure. Joy (in my sense) has indeed one characteristic, and one only, in common with them; the fact that anyone who has experienced it will want it again. Apart from that, and considered only in its quality, it might almost equally well be called a particular kind of unhappiness or grief. But then it is a kind we want. I doubt whether anyone who has tasted it would ever, if both were in his power, exchange it for all the pleasures in the world. But then Joy is never in our power and pleasure often is."

- How is joy different from happiness or pleasure?
- What does it mean that joy is "an unsatisfied desire which is itself more desirable than any other satisfaction."?
- Do you agree that there is an aspect of joy that can be experienced as "unhappiness or grief?" Why or why not?

3. **Read Zephaniah 3:14-20**. The Old Testament prophet Zephaniah wrote these words shortly before Israel was conquered and exiled. What things does Zephaniah predict that give him hope for the future? How are these same hopes relevant for us today?

4. **Read Philippians 4:4-7**. What specific instructions does the apostle Paul give in this passage? Which one do you most need to apply personally? Have you ever experienced the "peace that passes understanding" in a difficult time?

Scripture Quick Reference Guide

Zephaniah 3:14-20

¹⁴Sing, Daughter Zion; shout aloud, Israel! Be glad and rejoice with all your heart, Daughter Jerusalem! ¹⁵The LORD has taken away your punishment, he has turned back your enemy. The LORD, the King of Israel, is with you; never again will you fear any harm. ¹⁶On that day they will say to Jerusalem, "Do not fear, Zion; do not let your hands hang limp. ¹⁷The LORD your God is with you, the Mighty Warrior who saves. He will take great delight in you; in his love he will no longer rebuke you, but will rejoice over you with singing."

¹⁸"I will remove from you all who mourn over the loss of your appointed festivals, which is a burden and reproach for you. ¹⁹At that time I will deal with all who oppressed you. I will rescue the lame; I will gather the exiles. I will give them praise and honor in every land where they have suffered shame. ²⁰At that time I will gather you; at that time I will bring you home. I will give you honor and praise among all the peoples of the earth when I restore your fortunes before your very eyes," says the LORD.

Philippians 4:4-7

⁴Rejoice in the Lord always. I will say it again: Rejoice! ⁵Let your gentleness be evident to all. The Lord is near. ⁶Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. ⁷And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.